



Weekly Drought Brief Monday, June 16, 2014

CURRENT CONDITIONS

Fire Activity: CAL FIRE has responded to 2,257 wildfires across the state since January 1, burning 17,440 acres. This year's fire activity is well above the year-to-date average of 1,394 wildfires on 12,150 acres. Cal FIRE responded to over 200 new wildfires last week, including several fires in the Central Valley/foothills region such as the Haigh Fire in Mariposa County that was contained at 130 acres. While drought conditions have increased wildfires, additional firefighters and equipment mobilized earlier than normal have allowed CAL FIRE to contain these wildfires quickly in most cases.

Snow survey: The final manual [snowpack survey](#) of the season conducted on May 1 showed California snowpack at 18% of normal. A more [recent update](#) using automated devices shows snowpack at 0% of normal as of June 9.

Reservoir Levels (% capacity): [Reservoir Levels](#) as of June 12 remain low, including: Don Pedro 52%; Exchequer 29%; Folsom Lake 53%; Lake Oroville 47%; Millerton Lake 61%; New Melones 32%; Pine Flat 42%; San Luis 38%; Shasta 45%; and Trinity Lake 47%. An update of water levels at [other smaller reservoirs](#) is also available.

Vulnerable Water Systems: The California Department of Public Health is providing technical and funding assistance to help several communities facing near-term drinking water shortages. The Department is also monitoring water systems across the state to determine where else it can provide support. Already, over \$5 million has been identified for specific emergency drinking water projects, out of \$15 million appropriated for this purpose by emergency drought legislation passed by the State Legislature in March. Updated information can be found at the [CDPH Drinking Water Program](#) website.

Recent precipitation: No significant rain fell over the last week and no rain is expected this coming week.

KEY ACTION ITEMS FROM THIS WEEK

- **Emergency water curtailments:** No new water curtailments have been issued by the State Water Resources Control Board since over a week ago, when curtailment notices were issued to junior water rights holders in the Sacramento, San Joaquin and Russian River watersheds. The need to curtail more senior water right holders in these watersheds and curtail junior right holders in additional watersheds is being currently being evaluated. The State Water Board also began inspections last week to ensure compliance with curtailment notices. Updated information on water curtailments can be found on the Water Board's [curtailment webpage](#).
- **President Obama proposes more reliable federal funding for wildfires:** President Obama participated in the Western Governors Association meeting last week to highlight his proposed budget for the coming fiscal year that [sets aside \\$954 million in a new disaster fund for fighting wildfires](#). This fund would be called on in years when the federal cost of fighting fires exceeds the annual budgeted amount, which is happening more frequently as fire seasons lengthen and increase in severity.

- **Water agencies' conservation efforts being assessed:** Water agencies that serve California's cities and towns [will provide updates](#) to the State Water Resources Control Board on Tuesday (June 17) regarding their efforts to reduce water usage during the drought. These updates will complement the Water Board's statewide survey that tracks water agencies' conservation actions. Following this week's hearing, the Water Board will assess whether emergency regulations are needed to ensure adequate water conservation in the coming months. The Governor's recent [Proclamation of Continued Emergency Drought](#) has called on residents to limit outdoor irrigation and prevent wasteful water practices and directed water agencies to prevent water waste.
- **Groundwater basins prioritized within voluntary monitoring program:** The Department of Water Resources [announced on Tuesday](#) that nearly one in four of California's groundwater basins has been prioritized under the state's [California Statewide Groundwater Elevation Monitoring \(CASGEM\)](#) program. Prioritized groundwater basins that participate in the state's voluntary monitoring program are eligible for a variety of state grants to improve their groundwater supplies.
- **Emergency food aid:** The California Department of Social Services has provided over 71,000 boxes of food to date for counties impacted by the drought. The Department is working with local food banks to ensure that this food aid is targeted to residents most impacted by the drought.
- **Short-term rental assistance coming for drought impacted residents:** \$10 million in assistance will soon be available in short-term rental assistance to those impacted by the drought. The non-profit group [La Cooperativa](#) is scheduled to begin distributing rental assistance later this month in drought impacted counties.
- **Drought Taskforce leaders met in Yreka:** Leaders of the Governor's Drought Taskforce met with local officials in Yreka (Siskiyou County) on Friday. Discussions focused on recent water curtailments issued to water users in that region and the need for broader water conservation efforts through the state. The Taskforce's next regional meeting is scheduled for July 23 in San Francisco and will focus on water conservation.
- **Conservation efforts target landscapers:** The Department of Water Resources and the California Center for Urban Horticulture at UC-Davis [are holding two workshops for professional landscapers](#) to promote water efficient landscaping practices. These workshops, which will take place in Fresno (June 27) and Walnut Creek (June 25), continue statewide efforts to partner with landscaping professionals to expand water-smart practices.
- **Water saving tips promoted across the state:** The state's public awareness campaign, [SaveOurH2O.com](#), is leveraging hot and dry weather across the state to promote [water saving tips](#) via social media. Followers of SaveOurWater's [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) feeds have increased significantly in recent weeks.
- **Companies invited to support state's drought response:** CalVolunteers—state government's volunteer and philanthropy engagement arm—will meet with several major California companies on June 24 to identify drought-related community needs that could be addressed in part by foundation and corporate support.

- **ACWA releases report on regional Impacts of 2014 Drought:** Last week the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) released [a report](#) detailing specific impacts of the drought and proposing a range of strategies and actions to strengthen the resiliency of the state's water system.
- **Naval Base Coronado receives water conservation award:** Naval Base Coronado in San Diego recently received the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's [Federal Green Challenge program water conservation award](#). The prestigious award recognizes the base's efforts to reduce water use resulting in the conservation of over 100 million gallons last year.
- **Governor's Drought Task Force:** The Taskforce continues to meet daily to take actions that conserve water and coordinate state response to the drought.

Local Government

- **Local Emergency Proclamations:** A total of 46 local Emergency Proclamations have been received to date from city, county, and tribal governments, as well as special districts:
 - **Counties:** Glenn, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Lake, Madera, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, San Joaquin, Siskiyou, Sonoma, Shasta, Sutter, Tulare, Tuolumne, Yuba, and Mariposa.
 - **Cities:** Brooktrails Township-Mendocino County, City of Willits-Mendocino County, City of St. Helena-Napa County, City of Calistoga-Napa County, City of American Canyon-Napa County, City of Santa Barbara-Santa Barbara County, City of Montague-Siskiyou County, City of Live Oak-Sutter County, and San Juan Bautista
 - **Tribes:** Hoopa Valley Tribe in Humboldt County, Yurok Tribe in Del Norte County, Tule River Indian Tribe in Tulare County, Karuk Tribe in Siskiyou/Humboldt Counties, Sherwood Valley Pomo Indian Tribe, Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation
 - **Special Districts:** Lake Don Pedro Community Services District, Placer County Water Agency (PCWA), Twain Harte Community Services District, Carpinteria Valley Water District, Sonoma County Water Agency, Meiners Oaks Water District, Mariposa Public Utility District, Montecito Water District, Goleta Water District, Tuolumne Utilities District, Nevada Irrigation District
- **Water Agency Conservation Efforts:** The Association of California Water Agencies [has identified](#) several hundred local water agencies that have implemented water conservation actions. These water agencies [are responding to the drought](#) by implementing conservation programs, which include voluntary calls for reduced water usage and mandatory restrictions where water shortages are worst.
- **County Drought Taskforces:** A total of 26 counties have established drought task forces to coordinate local drought response. These counties include: Butte, Kern, Kings, Lake, Madera, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Monterey, Nevada, Orange, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Siskiyou, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Tuolumne, Yolo, and Napa. The Hoopa Tribe has also established a drought task force.

DROUGHT RELATED WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION

[Drought.CA.Gov](#): California's Drought Information Clearinghouse

State's Water Conservation Campaign, [Save our Water](#)
Local Government [Drought Clearinghouse and Toolkit](#)

California Department of Food and Agriculture, [Drought information](#)
California Department of Water Resources [Current Water Conditions](#)
California Data Exchange Center, [Snow Pack/Water Levels](#)
California State Water Resources Control Board, Water Rights, [Drought Info and Actions](#)
California Natural Resources Agency, [Drought Info and Actions](#)
California Department of Public Health, Drinking Water [CDPH Drinking Water Program](#)
California State Water Project, [Information](#)

[U.S. Drought Monitor](#) for current conditions throughout the region
[U.S. Drought Portal](#), National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS)
National Weather Service [Climate Predictor Center](#)
USDA Drought Designations by County [CA County Designations](#)
USDA Disaster and Drought Assistance Information [USDA Programs](#)
Small Business Administration Disaster Support: www.sba.gov/disaster